



Choose San Jose

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, December 27, 2010

San Jose is currently looking to find a Director of Economic Development. As The City embarks on this search, what qualities do you feel this person should have? Should they have a background of some particular flavor like commercial real estate, a housing developer, former elected official, lobbyist, economist, academic, small business, large business, tech background, etc? Should they be currently employed at another city? Should it be a local city or further away? Should it be a young person with a limited track record but strong potential or someone with a strong track record making San Jose their final stop?

All cities need planning. However, any plan, no matter what the plan, is subject to criticism, especially in San Jose. I think collectively there are a lot of ideas out there and not all of them new but sometimes the criticism rises higher than positive thoughts. Kim Walesh, our interim Director of Economic Development is certainly qualified. However, she is not interested in this permanent position. So the quest is on for this new unnamed person.

Does any particular person come to mind who would be good for this job? Would anyone high-caliber candidate want the job? The position pays approximately \$200K in total compensation. (216 people made over \$200K working for the City of San Jose in 2009.)

The City of San Jose has rolled out a new website showing our positive attributes for companies considering expansion or moving to San Jose. In past blogs I have mentioned a few companies relocating to San Jose such as Maxim, Atheros and other smaller VC-funded companies, which is good news for San Jose. Below is the new "Choose San Jose" website which is partially the work of the Office of Economic Development. What do you think of it?

<http://www.choosesanjose.com/>

I do not believe an economic director will be the salvation for any given city as much of the success or failure is dictated by the movement of capital and the free market. Yet having a strong communicator that makes sure each piston of the City's engine is hitting when the free market brings San Jose an opportunity would be ideal. In the meantime, if a strong economic director can convince elected leaders to not convert industrial land to housing that would be great start.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: *Comments will be approved sporadically today. Your patience is appreciated.*]

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